The Pronunciation of [ing] as a Social Marker in Miller's Death of A Salesman The Pronunciation of [ing] as a Social Marker in Miller's Death

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Abstract:

This study is intended to examine the language that reveals person 's social class, his/ her identity and gender through some of linguistic cues. These linguistic cues are called social markers which have social interaction and plays a great role to gather the information about social class and sex of the sender. This study works with written data from the play in middle of 20th century ''Death of A salesman'' by Arthur Miller. This play contains some of phonological differences that are utilized by New York speech community in 1940s. The conversation is written in slang and colloquial used in and around New York in the 1940s, with most people using sound [ɪn] instead of [ŋ] for suffixes [ing] and nouns ending with [ing] which can mark both the actor's gender and his / her social stratification in a particular text.

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INTRODUCATION

Language is simply more than words; it allows us to define ourselves as individuals and members of groups, and it reveals how we are connected to one another (Lakoff 2000) . Language serves as a source of social markers , it allows people to distinguish between each other ;also it allows to distinguish people who belong to different social groups and do not belong to the same social group This process will be done by using the most frequent linguistic items .

1.1 Definitions and Overviews

Markers may be linguistic and paralinguistic and extra linguistic cues which differentiate between various biological and social psychological categories or characteristics of speaker which are important actually or potentially for social organization and social interaction (Giles, Scherer and Taylor1979).Any element of morphological material having an identity, according to Laver and Trudgill (1979), is a "marker." For example, the English –s is a polarity marker. Any feature of speech that conveys information about the speaker's personal characteristics: sex, age, social class, emotion, and so on is referred to as an index. The connection between the index and its object was arbitrary, but we can allow an arbitrary relationship between some markers in speech and the personal traits expressed by them, or taken to be thus indicated by the hearer .

Scherer and Gilles (1979,xxi) state that social markers can be defined as ''Speech cues that potentially provide the receiver with information concerning the sender's biological, psychological and social characteristics. The term sign , index , symptom, indicator and clues are alternative to the term markers means''.

Social markers are described by Hudson(1996, p.21) as 'linguistic items' which are used as linguistic features by people from different stratification levels like lower and rich class or upper class in society. They are used to reflect their position in particular social groups that they belong to. Individuals of that group have phonological patterns, grammatical forms , morphological level, and norms that recognize them as members of particular social groups .

Yule (2020,298) argues that social markers are ''features occur frequently in your speech mark (or not mark you as a member of a particular social group whether you release it or not'', for instance ,the pronunciation of suffix –ing with /n/ sound rather than /ŋ/sound at the end of verbs such as *sitting* and *drinking* are socially associated with working – class speech (Ibid).

1.2 Characteristics of Social Markers

Cohen (2012) provides a list of characteristics of reliable markers that language satisfies. She distinguishes the optimal social marker from other linguistic cues as it; (a) more salient, (b) easily distinguishable, (c) essentially a personal characteristic of the individual (and secondarily of a group). (d) comparable throughout continuous dimensions, (e) not easy to fake, (f) easy to be derived inherently, (g) an ontogenetically primarily advancement,(h) permitting flexibility for its

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dynamic nature, (i) evolutionarily old, (j) very common among people (i.e. a property of all humans).

1.3 The Function of Social Markers

Identification and the ability to recognize age, gender, individuality, and group membership are important functions of social markers, and it appears that no permanent relationship of any type can be formed without the ability to recognize individual identity (Howard, Klaus, and Scherer,1979,p.348).

1- The function of recognition it used to arrive to accurate recognition of species , age , sex ,individuality ,local origin , group membership ,status and others (Ibid).

2-The function of identification is to apply many processes of information about individuals in groups and their social categories (Ibid). For example, identity markers in phone conversations not only identify the person, but the listener can identify information about the speaker such as age, gender, and the basis of their voice .

3-Psychological function ,the researchers point out that the stability and maintenance of personality type emotions such as agreeableness, neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, etc. are very important functions of social markers in certain social groups, otherwise the members of this group have lost their social position .

4-Social Significance markers that have special social significance that can be used a tag for classifying speaker's speech , that social markers based on differences between individuals because there would not be any markers without this variety. For example, in English drama, the researchers show their participants or actors as example of people in real life reflecting their social problems and political issues through their language. because there wouldn't be any markers without this variety.

1.4 Phonological Markers

Podesva (2006) cites on (Ekert 2000 and Zhang 2005) that the field of sociolinguistics is becoming increasingly interested in the social significance of variation. The third wave of transformation is referred to as this . For example, each language variation has a distinguishing feature for people's identity and personality (in vs.-ing), The phonetic differences between tokens in the same category have been overlooked. In order to comprehend the social meaning offered by phonological variation, the phonetic properties that characterize variants must be examined.

Nettle and Dunbar (1997, p.98) emphasize the claim that ''phonetic variables may be more informative, because they recur more often in speech than non-phonetic (i.e., lexical or morphosyntactic) variables.''

In fact , the speaker of the English language can adapt his pronunciation of certain words to the nature of the language and the nature of the situation and knows whether it is of a formal or an informal character. You can choose your style. The stylistic pattern shows that speakers levels of

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self-monitoring increase with formal speaking styles and decrease with less formal speaking styles.

Labov (1972) and others point out that the first or initial identification of variables is sound. Treating sounds as markers of people's identity in their social group leads to the fact that some people need some characteristics to suggest them as social markers, they have to be:

a- have a high frequency, b- have a very sailent variation and as a result c- have a general trait and systematically examined in the controlled environment of an artificial language system .

2.1 Social Class

In industrial countries like America and Britain , social class can be defined as a social variable which has a great influence on language variables especially. First, in America , the influence of inequalities of wealth and power on members of society correspond to their prestige and social perception , whereas in Britain the matter is different. The people are stratified hierarchically and are divided into many classes (Milroy and Gordon ,2003,p.41).

Although Americans have little interest in social structure or class language they view the phrase "social class" as an unpleasant phrase which used to describe class stratification(Labov,2006,p.132).

There are strong cultural narratives in Unites States, particularly in the middle of 20th century ,such as meritocracy, and the *American dream* is popular story in the United States that romanticizes the idea that people choose their future success through effort and popular media stories, despite the fact that people's income , occupation, and level of education (Kraus et al., 2017,p.1).

Max Weber (1864-1920) uses his theory of social class to measure persons' status in the scope of wealth , lifestyle , occupation and life chances based on acquisition within the market place. Meyerhoff (2011, p.165) comments that Weber in his work was interested in religious economic , social order and industrial social conflict . Sociolinguists interpret linguistic variation that is stratified by social class.

In order to distinguish between the ten classes in New York City, Labov employs three indicators: occupation, income, and education. Robinson (1979) asserts a connection between social class and markers, which are the distinctive features of each social class's speech and writing that enable or permit members of that society to determine which social class a person belongs to.

Pronunciation of [N] sound after the words having ING at the end .the less you are educated the more chances you will pronounce [N] after ING like (*sitting , walking , Bathing, drinking*), are associated with working –class speech (Yule , 2020,p.298).

According to Trudgill (2000,p.36), the pronunciation of [ŋ] is used for the highest social group in more formal settings, while [n] is used for the lowest social group (lower class).

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2.2 Social stratification

In this study , the researchers refer to Labov's book entitled '' *The social Stratification of English in New York City''*." We can hardly consider the social distribution of language in New York City without encountering the pattern of social stratification which pervades the life of the city. "(Labov,1966, p. 40) . The social relevance of linguistic factors for various speech communities and their association with an objective indicator of class stratification are strongly related. ''We have already seen a lot of evidence that variables are subject to quite systematic stratification in speech of individuals or on speech community'' (Meyerhoff,2011,169) .

Sometimes, one type of social markers is more frequent in the speech of upper-class and another is more often in the speech of lower-class. For example, the frequency of alveolar (non-standard) variant (ɪn) for the speaker's socioeconomic class in four locations and community in Australia and New Zealand . This variant is associated with lower – class whereas (ɪŋ) is more frequent in middle-class. That social stratification can be change depending on some aspect of class , for instance social mobility is a defining characteristic of class system . The social position can be changed upwards or downwards during lifetime by developing a new way of speaking and improving themselves or their children prospect (Kerswill,2009,p.2). They have a lot of a scribed status based on family name and using for Received Pronunciation (RP) the "Queen's English" cover the upper class speech. There will be significant differences between social classes in hierarchical civilizations, but these differences will be minimal in flatter society.

2.2.1 Phonological Markers Associated with Social Class

One of the indicators of social class is the type of English language the individuals use and pronounce . Some of the variations in the sounds tell us what area a person he /she is from ; for example , Canada, Scotland or from others . Nettle and Dunbar (1997,p.98) cite in (Graham ,1869,p.156) that ''phonetic variables may be more informative more than non –phonetic''. Standard English pronunciation is today considered to be the language of the highest class. Because of their high social status, i.e. they pronounce words more consistently than other people.

In this study the researchers choose social marker suffix-ing in English with its alternative sounds [ɪn] and [ɪŋ] . In English speaking communities when the speaker pronounces the final consonant [ŋ] at the end of words (verbal words) such as (*working, planning, going, doing*) and pronouncing [ɪn] phonetic at the end of nouns like (*running)* or verbal construction like(*running and playing*). [ɪn] is a characteristic of informal speech (Robinson,2019,p.2).

2.3 Gender as A social Variables

Gender is associated with socially constructed roles or the relationship between women and men. Both gender equality and social conditions affect their language use. Linguistic features which occur only in the women's speech or only in the men's speech make both of them speak

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differently. They are easily recognized as members of their social group in particular speech community (Holmes,2013,p.160). When the community is very hierarchical, men are more powerful than women. These differences reflect all social status and power (Ibid).

The biological distinction between persons (sex) is constant and cannot change over time, but the use of the term "gender" as a categorization, gender roles can change rapidly as a result of society division.

Holmes (1995) states that not only phonological differences can be distinguished between them, but there are many of lexical and grammatical variations. For example, women use longer words than men. Lakoff (as cited in Holmes 1995) assumes that women avoid the incorrect pronunciation such as the final ' g ' in words such as ' going ' instead of the more causal among men ' goin ' .

2.3.1 Differences in Pronunciation

According to Heffernan (2007), phonological construction differs between males and females. The temporal and acoustic correlation of the phonological constituents which produced by females are typically greater than those produced by males. Men's speech is usually provided the norm against which women's speech is measured. (Wardhaugh ,2006,p.316).

Considerably , the social distinctive of people has vital role in their choosing the language for instance , the famous anthropologist Levi- Strauss noted how an Amazonian father laughed at his young daughter for using the male words for hunting (Spolsky , 1998,p.37) . Fischer (1958,p.51) puts in his earliest studies of gender variation of /n/ variables in word-*singin v*ersus *singing*, that girls are more – ing than boys implying that girls are more sensitive to overt social correction and more prestigious forms than men (Paulston and Tucker , 2003,p. 245).

Most of linguists agree with this distinctive phonological feature which has a social function, Ficher (1958,p.51) concludes that the choice between the [ɪŋ] and [ɪn] variants appears to be related to gender, class, personality (aggressive/cooperative) and mood (tense/relaxed) of the speaker. In addition, this marker can give the formality of the conversation, and with the specific spoken verb (Mesthrie et al., 2009,p. 76).

Hudson (1996,p.193) points out that " Females (of every age) use high-prestige standard variants more often than men do'' .Women use more-ing [ɪŋ] pronunciation and fewer –in [ɪn] pronunciation than men in word (e.g. *swimming, typing*) . In Norwich Men use [ɪn]which is more vernacular form and stigmatized nonstandard usage than women in words (e.g., *speaking and walking*) (Coates 2015 and Holmes,2013,p.163- 164).

3.1 The Model Adapted and Method of Analysis

In this study , the researchers examine the findings of social marker [ing] for verbs and nouns which end with [ing]in structure of selected texts from selected play of " *Death of a salesman*" . The researchers use two books edited by Scherer and Giles (1979) and Labov's book entitled ''*The social Stratification of English in New York City* '' (1966) are used to get an

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inclusive and comprehensive view of the findings of social markers. By using Eclectic model, the researchers select two of the social variables (independent variables) for the current study (social class and gender).

This study concludes that social drama is related to the existence of social markers since it reflects the language which is used consciously by people of different social classes and how language discriminates individuals in the same community. Definitely , it involves many of the social problems such as inequality , luck of education and political issues that social drama is shown it in theater .

3.1.1 Data Collection

In this research , the methodology is employed around the following data which are gathered from text materials written by selected playwright and from selected play texts.

In collecting data the writer applies the documentation method because the source of data is written source . It is a kind of techniques of collecting the data like written document especially in books like drama or play . The main data of this study is obtained from " *Death of a Salesman"* by Arthur Miller (1949) .

3.1.2 Synopsis of 'Death of a Salesman' (1949)

In less than a day, Arthur Miller composed the first act of "Death of a Salesman." . It opened on February 10 , 1949 at the Morosco Theatre. It consists of five acts this play have very complicated setting , there are more than twenty changeable scenes , changes from the present to the past and back again (Hedayatifar , 2012,p.3) . This play shows decline of a society's culture since it reflects the feelings , beliefs , norms , and experience of its actors.

According to Bayouli and Sammalie (2019,p.49) Miller elicited 'American Dream' . For example , he blames the capitalist system of destroying working class both Charley and Bernard and Willy are members from the same class live successfully. Miller blames the society and Willy will be responsible on his choice (Hedayatifar, 2012,p.2). Willy as head of his family uses language elevate his social status in order to pretend as if he is higher educated man therefore , he uses standard language with logic and more prestigious means the language that commonly used by upper-class . In another situation he uses non-standard forms and colloquial words.

3.2 Social Markers in " Death of a Salesman"

This play was written to critique of American society especially the capitalism which effect hardly on American society and working – class in 1940 , almost the characters have working class background. Willy represents the discrimination of older people in an American society . It shows how the elderly are looked down upon or have no equal rights and have their jobs taken away for no reason other than age . In this study the social markers will disclose the social class and gender of the characters. The play appeals the language used in most of conversation and the accent of the speech community of American in New York, Miller tries to use the language that

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he knows well. The language is used as it was spoken by ordinary people in New York 1940s . This language involved bad grammar , slang , and casual style , sloppy pronunciation .

In this play, Miller tries to inflect the pronunciation in writing . It is a way of writing to show how it sounds in informal conversation, therefore; this study is limited to the written form of language, only the phonological aspects of markers which occur on printed page in literary texts are taken into consideration in this analysis of this play .

Analysis of Text No.(1)

In the second act of this play , Willy is in conversation with his friend Charley, that Charley mentioned the word (nobody's worth **nothin**') (Act II:76)

Phonological Markers

In American society, the pronunciation of (ng) [ŋ] is eliminated, according to RP (Received pronunciation) , it is incorrect. The incorrect form above is utilized according to the informality of situation. In American society, people always use it as daily conversation and become more interesting thing to use. In this social drama, the incorrect form is employed in many of texts, for instance, the use of (**nothin'**) in this informal conversation.

1- Social Class

In this a current study, when a group of people is recognized exclusively by one thing they share in common, such as class, gender, race, and etc. The relationship between social markers[N] and Charley's social identity building in his social group as Willy's neighbor.

2- Gender

Phonological marker can be caused gender differences , that men are often use incorrect pronunciation rather than women.

Analysis of Text No.(2)

According to Willy's inconsistent mood, he frequently uses the wrong pronunciation of the -ing in his language in this informal conversation as in (**somethin'**) (Act II : 55)

Phonological Markers

Willy again in this text used the sound / n/ instead of / ŋ/ in word (**somethin'**).

1 -Social Class

One of the indicators of social class is the type of English language an individual uses and their pronunciation. Some of the variations in the sounds tell us what area a person he /she is from . Willy again used is the sound /n/ instead of /ŋ/ in word **'somethin'** to marks his social class as a man from middle- class with lower incomes.

2 -Gender

The phonological marker /In/ is socially associated with men rather than women, that emphasis the idea that women try to be more prestigious and highly aware to her social standing than men in society .

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Analysis of Text No.(3)

At first act in this paly , Willy uses words as in (**comin , carryin**) (Act I:18)

 Phonological Markers

The alternative pronunciation of (ing) marks the social class of group of people . For instance, that (Willy , Linda , Biff and Happy) are from working – class , the reader will get this information from speech cues are used in texts , such sounding /ɪn/ at the end of verbs (**comin , carryin**) is associated with people from working class . Willy's speech isn't much slangy or has a high formality . He speaks in a way that marks him as a typical middle-aged, middle-class person. His character, though, is formed by what he says.

1 -Social Class

Both phonological and lexical cues serve a social purpose by classifying characters as working-class or upper-class.

2 -Gender

Since the phonological marker /In/ is socially associated with men rather than women, there are gender variations for this marker.

Analysis of Text No.(4)

In second act , the conversation occurs among (Linda , Willy and Charley), Linda used words like (**kidding , playing**) in contrast , Charley used (**goin** ') (Act II : 67)

 Phonological Markers

The researchers conclude from this text , Linda used the progressive verb (*kidding and playing)* sounding /ŋ/ but Charley used (**goin'**) is sounding /n/ . As a result , Suffixes –ing marks gender differences. Linda represents herself as a woman from middle- class '' Of all the variables studied in this book , (ing) has been found to have the greatest generality over English – speaking world , and has been the subject of the most fruitful study '' (Labov 1966,p. 259) .

1 -Social Class

Because it is only used in the daily language of persons from the middle and working classes in America, this marker has social connotations.

2 -Gender

Linda is a symbol of normalcy , realism and steadiness in a house. Generally, women tend to be more social , more standard and more prestigious forms than men. Otherwise, men tend to use non-standard language when they find themselves in informal situation . Linda used the progressive verb (kidding and playing) is sounding /ŋ/ while Charley used the verb (goin') sounding /n/. Suffixes with the suffix –ing indicates gender differences.

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3.3 Results and Discussion

The results show the frequent use of social markers (ing) in texts . This phonological feature in spoken of people improve its importance and highly social functions .

1- First , social cues (markers) in a speaker's speech might indicate different social classes, such as upper, middle, and working classes, or gender variations between male and female speakers.

2- Second, social markers [ing] pronunciation have recognition and identity social groups as groups of women or men, such as the Willy family (Linda, Biff, and Happy), his neighbors (Charley and Bernard), and other social members such as the waiter Stanly.

3- Third, through dramatic writings, these social markers and other markers reveal the true personality of the characters. Willy employs a wide range of slang in different situations, and he also uses ungrammatical and colloquial language, particularly when he is comfortable. When Willy's bad mood is heightened, he employs slang and repeated words, as well as a minimum answer and other features .

In these selected texts , the researchers conclude that most of words that end with [ing] is sounding /ŋ/ are said either by female speaker or a man in formal situation. Otherwise words sounding /n/ at the end of words marks the vernacular or the dialect of people in American, the New Yorkers tend to use this incorrect pronunciation to mark their region and their social position. It is associated with men speech and people from working class. The researchers illustrate that by using these figures :
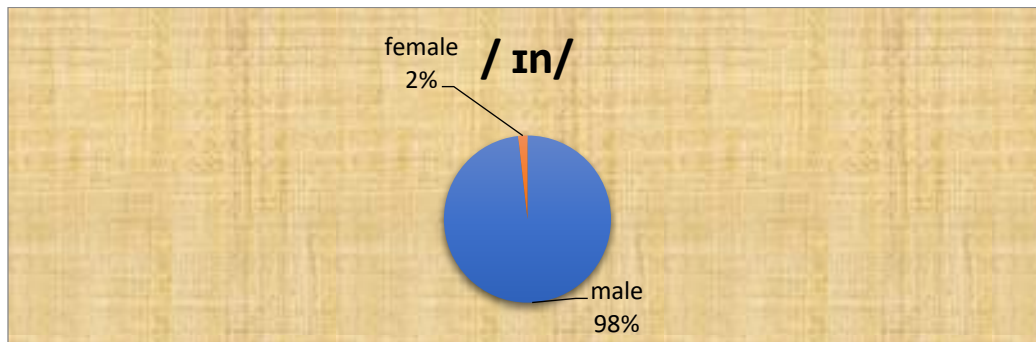

Figure (1): The rate of pronouncing /ɪn/ sound in ' Death of A salesman '

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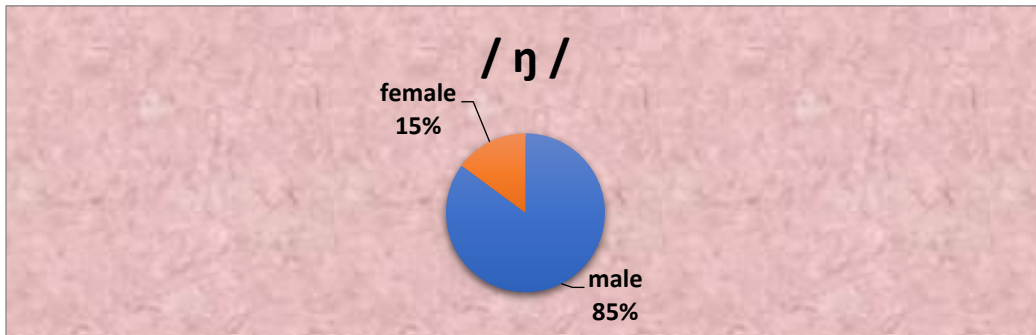*Prof. Khalil Ismail Rijia (PhD) | Lamia Sulieman Mohammed*

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Figure (2) : The rate of pronouncing /ŋ/ sound in ' Death of A salesman '
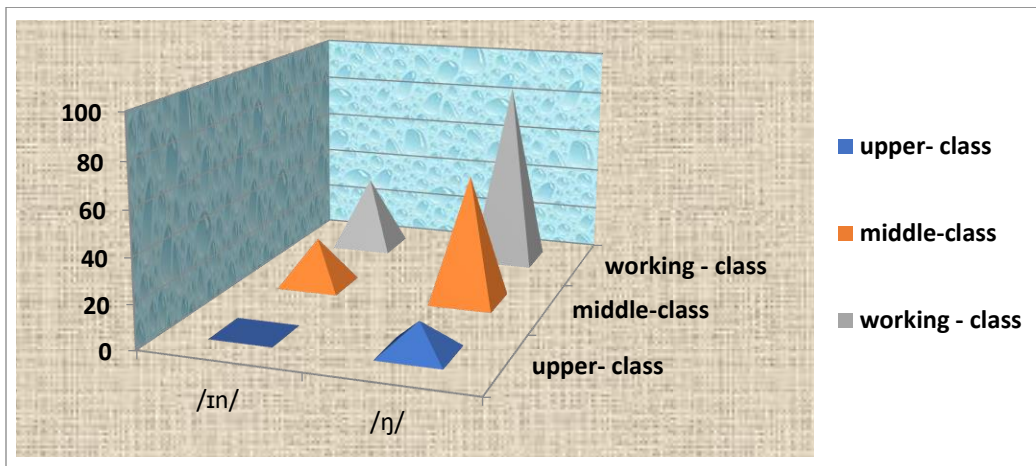

Figure (3) : The social class differences in pronouncing [ing]

Miller's play " *Death of A salesman* " records number of words ending with [ing]. Most of them are occupied by the main characters Willy and his son Biff according to their dramatic role in the story . The sounding /ɪn/ of men is (55) out of (56) representing 98% and only 2% of them are pounced by women . Men use words like (*comin', doin' , goin' and knockin'* and etc.) , the same words are used by women but women have lower rate , they use only (1) out of (56) that means this social marker shows gender differences . Linda records (0.) and Jenny uses just one time word like (*workin'*) .

In contrast , social marker -ing shows social class differences , characters who have high class with high wealth income records (0.) using correct pronunciation of [ing] like ; Howard , Bernard and Ben that means they tend to be more prestigious as their role in play reflecting their social position in capitalist society than other characters who reflect the real life of ordinary

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American people . The language is simple and contains many of incorrect usage of words , this phenomena is marked by Biff , Happy , Charley , and Stanley .

Although , the occurrences of alternative sound / ŋ / records (158) words , the researchers choose only words that have frequently two alternative choice of speech , women rise their rate to become 15 % and men 85% . This social marker shows gender differences because it is associated with men in informal situation and in stable behavior and women in their tendency to be more standard and more social .

In addition , this marker has social class differences, that Stanley is shown. as a waiter and less educated man in his few sentences. He records (0.) sounding /ŋ/ while Ben , Bernard and Haward pronounced it in some texts .Finally , the researchers conclude that Willy Loman as the main character in play uses the highest percentage for two sounds for this phonological marker, he records about 36.7% percent of (158) word end with /ŋ/ and 39 % percent of (56) words end with /ɪn/ that can be shown his changeable mood and instability of his personality, Willy uses employs simple language and incorrect pronunciation , slangs terms, this language marks his current social position, but his standard and high variety of speech in other texts marks another social position that he dreams of being as a well-liked salesman through the 'American Dream'.

CONNCLUSIONS

When we examine the language of any speech community, such as (American and British), we discover a plethora of social markers that separate each group within a broad speech community. Miller is one of the playwrights who uses this strategy in creating his play, his welling to make his audience find or construct a picture around the identity of characters even though they are not seen at all . Furthermore, the crucial function of social drama in the middle of the twentieth century in America society discuss social and political issues such as educational disparity, capitalism, and discrimination of the working class, which has an impact on how they use language signals. That better drama has a significant impact on society's language since it is a reflection of actual life as it is spoken now.

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كدالة اجتماعية في موت البائع المتجول لميلر(ing) اللفظ

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الملخص :

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص اللغة التي تكشف عن الطبقة الاجتماعية للشـخص ، وهويته / هويتـه وجنسـه من خلال بعض الإشـارات اللغوية. تسـمى هذه الإشـارات اللغوية بـالعلامـات الاجتماعية التي لها تفاعل اجتماعي وتلعب دورًا كبيرًا في جمع المعلومـات حول الطبقة الاجتمـاعية وجنس المرسـل. تعمل هذه الدراسـة مع بيانات مكتوبة من مسرحية "موت بائع متجول" في منتصف القرن العشرين للمخرج آرثر ميللر. تحتوي هذه المسـرحية على بعض الاختلافات الصـــوتية التي اســتخدمها مجتمع الكلام في نيويورك في الأربعينيات. تمت كتابة المحادثة بـالعامية والعامية المسـتخدمة في نيويورك وحولها في الأربعينيات من القرن الماضـي ، حيث اسـتخدم معظم الأشـــخاص الصـوت [in]بدلاً من [ŋ]للواحق [ing]والأسماء التي تنتهي بـ [ing]والتي يمكن أن تحدد كلا من جنس الممثل وتقسيمه الاجتماعي في نص معين.

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